

February 23, 2006

Bob Engler
Stockard Engler Brigham LLC
10 Concord Avenue
Cambridge MA 02138

Dear Bob:

A number of areas of concern with respect to the architectural design of the proposed Belmont project were mentioned in the comment letters ADD Inc has received and reviewed to date. The following is a summary of our understanding of the most significant of those areas of concern, followed by our response:

1. **Site Plan / Building Layout** – The concern has been raised that “the proposed project is too dense for the site”, with “virtually no useable open space to enhance the quality of life for the residents”.

Response: The site plan concept was to create an efficient layout, thereby leaving as much natural surroundings as possible. Additionally, the symmetrical “key hole” shaped building layout affords the maximum amount of perimeter views of the surrounding wooded area as possible from the residential units themselves. Despite the letter writer’s own additional comment that the adjacent Alewife Reservation “..is the largest passive recreational area in this region..”, the comment concerning the need for useable open space for the residents is a good one and warrants further consideration and response from the design team as the review process moves forward.

2. **Fire Department vehicle access** - The concern has been raised that “the proposed development does not allow sufficient access to or around buildings B&D.”

Response: While the majority of proposed buildings do have 100% perimeter fire lane accessibility, it is true that the current submitted site plan does not allow 100% access to buildings B&D. Although such 100% access is not technically required for buildings of this size and construction type as defined by the Massachusetts State Building Code, the design team is committed to working with the Belmont Fire Department to review this concern and resolve it to their complete satisfaction.

210 Broadway Cambridge Massachusetts 02139
phone 617.234.3100 fax 617.661.7118
www.addinc.com

Cambridge San Francisco Miami

3. **Location of parking below wood framed buildings-** The concern has been raised that "the design concept of having many vehicles garaged in a wood frame building could cause multiple hazards".

Response: While the residential floors will be protected wood frame construction (Type 5A as defined by the Massachusetts State Building Code), the basement parking level of each building will be built of non-combustible (steel and concrete) construction, and will be separated from the residential floors by a 2 hour-rated fire separation. In addition, all floors of the buildings will be fully sprinklered, with smoke detection and fire alarm systems. The parking levels will also be ventilated as required by the Massachusetts State Building Code. [The proposed type of construction is in fact rather common for 4 story suburban residential projects in Massachusetts.]

4. **Energy efficiency concerns -** The concern has been raised that the proposed project should "be constructed to "Energy Star" standards based on energy efficiency and environmental concerns."

Response: The proposed project is currently in the Schematic Design stage, during which the overall project size, square footage, unit count and unit mix, and architectural character are being established. Most of the details of the project are still to be worked out during the subsequent Design Development and Construction Documents phases of the design process. ADD Inc has 15 LEED - accredited (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) professionals on staff, and is one of the leading Boston-based design firms with respect to environmentally-conscious design. The design team is committed to evaluating the energy efficiency of all building systems, major construction materials, unit appliances and unit fixtures, and then specifying these items with "green design" in mind to the maximum extent economically feasible for this project.

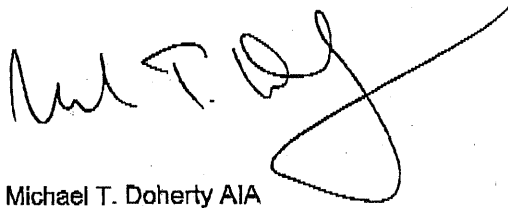
5. **Architectural Design Character -** The concern has been raised that the design character of the proposed project is "not Belmont-like."

Response: Responding to a comment as non-specific as this is somewhat challenging. The natural inclination might perhaps be to ask "exactly what *is* Belmont-like?" And although this might seem at first like a flippant response, in fact there must be many different buildings in the community that might be considered to be "Belmont-like" - presumably many of which are not alike one another at all. This is simply to say that, like any town of its size, there is a certain amount of variety of architectural character and styles to be found in Belmont. And so not everyone will necessarily agree on what is "Belmont-like" and what isn't. What we

hopefully can all agree on is that taking the comment to heart, and looking a bit closer at some of the exterior building materials, design elements, precedents and design motifs that are to be found in Belmont can only help the design team improve the character of the project as the process moves forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond in writing to these important issues. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael T. Doherty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Michael T. Doherty AIA
Senior Associate Principal